AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1. **(CANCELED)**

2. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** An article conveying apparatus for conveying articles between a plurality of article storage sections for storing therein the articles and a predetermined entry and exit port, the apparatus comprising:

an elongated running truck body that is movable in a longitudinal direction along a lower track laid along the article storage sections;

a platform provided with a transfer device for transferring articles;

an upper truck body guided along an upper track laid on a ceiling to face toward the lower track; and

raising and lowering poles for guiding and supporting said platform to be capable of freely ascending and descending,

wherein each of said raising and lowering poles has a lower end connected to a vertical side surface of said running truck body and an upper end connected perpendicularly to a vertical side surface of said upper truck body, each of said raising and lowering poles being vertically oriented, and wherein said upper truck body and said running truck body are each located on the same vertical side surface of each of said raising and lowering poles.

3. **(CANCELED)**

4. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The article conveying apparatus according to claim 2, wherein a centerline of said raising and lowering poles is substantially a centerline of the article conveying apparatus when viewed along the direction of travel of said article conveying apparatus.

5. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** An article conveying apparatus for conveying articles between a plurality of article storage sections for storing therein the articles and a predetermined entry and exit port, the apparatus comprising:

an elongated running truck body that is movable horizontally in a longitudinal direction along a track laid along the article storage sections;

a platform provided with a transfer device for transferring articles; and

raising and lowering poles, each connected perpendicularly to said running truck body, and guiding and supporting said platform to be capable of freely ascending and descending, wherein said running truck body has a vertically oriented side surface; said vertically oriented side surface being connected to a lower end of each of said raising and lowering poles, and wherein said running truck body is supported by wheels guided along said track, said wheels being provided in alignment with the respective positions where said raising and lowering poles are connected to the running truck body.

6. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** An article conveying apparatus for conveying articles between a plurality of article storage sections for storing therein the articles and a predetermined entry and exit port, the apparatus comprising:

an elongated running truck body having distal ends, said running truck body being horizontally oriented and movable horizontally in a longitudinal direction along a track laid along the article storage sections;

a platform provided with a transfer device for transferring articles;

a pair of raising and lowering poles connected perpendicularly to a vertical side surface of said running truck body at the distal ends of said running truck body, and guiding and supporting said platform to be capable of freely ascending and descending;

a pair of raising and lowering ropes ~~each rope having one end connected to an upper part~~ respectively having one ends connected to a front upper end and a rear upper end of said platform for suspending and supporting said platform and another ends connected to the center of said platform in the vicinity of the center of the platform; and

a driving wheel for feeding and winding said pair of raising and lowering ropes, said raising and lowering ropes each being guided from the upper part of said platform to the vicinity of the center of said running truck body via said driving wheel.

7. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** The article conveying apparatus according to claim 6, wherein a tension setting device is located in said platform to adjust a tension of each of said pair of raising and lowering ropes, said tension setting device including a pair of tension springs respectively having one ends connected to said pair of raising and lowering ropes, and a pair of chain bolts respectively connected to another ends of said tension springs to set the tension of each of said pair of raising and lowering ropes.

8. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** The article conveying apparatus according to claim [[1]] 2, further comprising:

wheels supporting said running truck body;

a drive device for driving said wheels supporting said running truck body, said drive device being disposed on a vertically oriented flat side of said running truck body that is opposite a vertically oriented flat side surface on which said raising and lowering poles are connected.

9. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** The article conveying apparatus according to claim [[1]] 2, wherein a raising and lowering drive device for raising and lowering said platform is located on a vertically oriented flat side surface at a latitudinal end of said running truck body.

10. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** The article conveying apparatus according to claim [[1]] 2, further comprising a control panel for the article conveying apparatus having at least one swinging door provided to face one longitudinal end of said truck body, said control panel being located at an outside position of and supported by said raising and lowering poles.

11. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** The article conveying apparatus according to claim [[1]] 2, further comprising a contact surface for engagement with a shock absorber located at a terminal end of the track, said contact surface disposed along one of said vertically oriented flat side surface of

said running truck body and set back from one of the longitudinal ends of the running truck body so as to prevent a machine length of the running truck body from increasing.